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SOUTH AFRICA: Modest Progress in Talks

[redacted] government and ANC officials are playing down the results of last week's bilateral meetings. [redacted]

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[redacted] The two sides agreed to hold the first nonracial elections next year and to streamline the process when multiparty talks resume. Government officials claim substantial compromises were made on transitional governing arrangements and on the devolution of power to regional governments. The talks apparently have also helped restore trust between the parties. [redacted]

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Comment: The parties probably are minimizing their progress in order to avoid renewal of the charges of collusion that followed their last high-profile meeting in September. Although they are likely to continue to reach bilateral agreements on key issues, they almost certainly recognize the need to forge a broader consensus through multiparty talks. Nevertheless, trust between the two and progress in the talks remain fragile. The political environment continues to deteriorate and could decline further if a rightwing backlash to the recent violence against whites materializes and aggressive tactics by Zulu Chief Buthelezi intensify. [redacted]

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SOUTH KOREA: Government Pressing Opposition

The major opposition candidates for president are denouncing investigations into their campaign activities [redacted]

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The government says Hyundai Corporation has made sizable illegal donations to United People's Party candidate Chung Ju Yung, who is Hyundai's former chairman. Several Hyundai officials have been arrested [redacted]

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[redacted] On Sunday police searched the offices of the largest dissident group, which recently endorsed DP candidate Kim Dae Jung. [redacted]

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